

America's Most Endangered Rivers of 2007



American Rivers
Thriving By Nature

www.AmericanRivers.org



ABOUT AMERICA'S MOST ENDANGERED RIVERS

The *America's Most Endangered Rivers* report is one of the best-known and longest-lived annual reports in the environmental movement — but it is much more than that. Each year, grassroots river conservationists team up with American Rivers to use the report to save their hometown river, consistently scoring policy successes that benefit these rivers and the communities through which they flow.

American Rivers solicits nominations from thousands of river groups, environmental organizations, outdoor clubs and others for the *America's Most Endangered Rivers* report. Our staff and scientific advisors review the nominations for the following criteria:

- The magnitude of the threat to the river
- A major decision point in the coming year
- The regional and national significance of the river

The report highlights ten rivers whose fate will be decided in the coming year, and encourages decisionmakers to do the right thing for the rivers and the communities they support. The report presents alternatives to proposals that would damage rivers, identifies those who make the crucial decisions and points out opportunities for the public to take action on behalf of each listed river.

AMERICAN RIVERS WOULD LIKE TO THANK BERT AND BARBARA COHN

for their dedicated financial support of this campaign. By helping us highlight threats to America's rivers, the Cohn's generosity helps ensure a better future for these important resources.

We would also like to thank the **DUN FOUNDATION** for the financial support they have provided this year to help us raise awareness about these embattled rivers. As in years past, we expect this report will contribute to positive outcomes for the rivers featured on its pages.



BERT AND BARBARA COHN

ABOUT AMERICAN RIVERS

Founded in 1973, American Rivers is a national non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring healthy natural rivers for the benefit of people, wildlife and nature. Our work is driven by a core conviction that a healthy river is one of a community's most valuable assets.

American Rivers has more than 65,000 supporters nationwide, with offices in Washington, DC and the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, Midwest, Southeast, California and Northwest regions. Learn more at AmericanRivers.org

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AMERICA'S MOST ENDANGERED RIVERS OF 2007



1. SANTA FE RIVER

2. SAN MATEO CREEK

3. IOWA RIVER

4. UPPER DELAWARE RIVER

5. WHITE SALMON RIVER

6. NECHES RIVER

7. KINNICKINNIC RIVER

8. NEUSE RIVER

9. LEE CREEK

10. CHUITNA RIVER

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Our beloved former board member Charles Kuralt put it best: “America is a great story and there’s a river on every page.”

This is the 22nd year that American Rivers has issued this annual report on rivers at risk. But why endangered rivers? What is so special about rivers that makes them different from a host of other natural places and wild creatures that vie for our attention?

Consider the story of one of America’s founding rivers. The Susquehanna River does not have an easy life as it flows through New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland on its way to the Chesapeake Bay. With a long history of urbanization and industry along its banks, the Susquehanna exhibits most of the symptoms of a river that’s seen too much abuse for too long. Discharges of raw and partially treated sewage into the river — worst during rainstorms that overwhelm many of the over-taxed, out-of-date treatment plants along its course — contribute much of the pollution that fouls the river and chokes the treasured Chesapeake.

But for all its woes, the Susquehanna is a much-loved river, a place of respite and recreation, as well as surprising beauty. Fly fishers

cast for huge smallmouth bass, often in the company of one of the many professional fishing guides who make a good living on the river. World-class whitewater kayakers seek out the crashing waves on the river below Holtwood Dam. The Susquehanna River Trail is one of America’s best-loved “blue trails,” giving canoeists a chance to explore beautiful stretches upstream of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

It is no surprise that the love of this great river and the threats to it often crash into one another. In 2005, this conflict came to a head when American Rivers named the Susquehanna the Most Endangered River in the United States.

It is important to understand that our *America’s Most Endangered Rivers* report isn’t about the most polluted rivers in the country, or the most degraded. The ten rivers listed here are rivers at a major crossroads. These rivers face a major decision in the coming year that will dramatically and drastically affect the health of the river and the ability of people to enjoy it.

On the Susquehanna, the immediate threats included plans by the town of Wilkes-Barre to construct a huge, inflatable dam, as well as proposals that could have actually increased the dumping of sewage into the river. The inflatable dam is a fundamentally flawed idea, but it was born of a desire we share: to get people more involved with the river in their own backyards. But in a sad irony, sewage contamination from inadequate and aging pipes means that the river upstream of the proposed inflatable dam is often contaminated by dangerous pathogens, hardly the recreational playground of which the town dreams.

The reaction to our listing of the Susquehanna was immediate, galvanizing and a vivid reminder of the power of informed people.

On the very day that we named this river



“...FLOWING
WATER CAN
BRING
MIRACLES IN
ITS WAKE.”



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the most endangered in the country, Maryland officials backed away from weakening clean water standards throughout the state. Then-Governor Robert Ehrlich and the state Department of the Environment dropped plans to designate the Susquehanna as a “limited use” river, which would have declared it too dirty to bother cleaning up. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also dropped its proposal to adopt a new policy on “blending,” which would have legalized the dumping of partially treated sewage into rivers across the country. Locally, the Susquehanna River Basin Commission agreed to institute a yearly analysis of the river and its tributaries. A partnership of environmental organizations, local citizens groups, and municipal, state and federal agencies, has since removed six dams on creeks that feed the river. While the proposed dam in Wilkes-Barre remains a threat, public opposition to the plan is growing steadily.

Today the outlook for the Susquehanna is bright; people who love the river are fighting for it; and American Rivers is proud of the role we played in focusing that energy and attention.

The Susquehanna is but one of our many success stories for endangered rivers over the past two decades. That’s important to remember as we recognize that the rivers we list in



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2007 also face a dizzying array of immediate threats — from proposed dams on the Neches River and Lee Creek, to toxic sediments in the Kinnickinnic, to coal mining in the headwaters of the Chuitna, to a proposed power line that would mar the scenic Upper Delaware. This year’s Most Endangered River, the Santa Fe, faces the gravest river-killing threat of all: no water.

So why endangered rivers? The love people feel for their rivers, their passion to protect them and the stunning healing powers that a river can show when we simply give it a chance are the reason we shine a spotlight every year on ten rivers that need urgent attention.

We know what is possible for these rivers because of what we can see with our own eyes, that flowing water can bring miracles in its wake. America’s Most Endangered Rivers of 2007 are ten places where those miracles can happen.

Rebecca R. Wodder

Rebecca R. Wodder
President, American Rivers

HEALTHY RIVERS HELP
COMMUNITIES THRIVE.



DAVID B. SOFTE

DAVID B. SOFTE

#1 SANTA FE RIVER

THREAT: SEVERE LACK OF WATER IN THE RIVER

SUMMARY

To an entire generation of Santa Fe residents, the city's namesake river is not a river at all for most of the year, but a dry, weed-choked ditch. Dams for the city's water supply block the river before it can leave the mountains which give it birth, while wells throughout the city have lowered the water table to the point where it no longer sustains the river. The city, county and state governments are investing millions of dollars for parks and trails along the river channel in the name of "river restoration" — but stream restoration without water is no restoration at all. There is an unparalleled opportunity to bring the river back to life as the city government considers the option of a flowing river. The city of Santa Fe, which controls most of the river's water, needs to restore at least some flow to the river, even as it develops a water budget and permanent commitment to restoration that sustain the community and recapture the many benefits of a healthy river.

THE RIVER

The Santa Fe River begins in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and flows 42 miles before reaching the Rio Grande, but this relatively small river is steeped in history. The Spanish established their administrative capital beside

the river in 1610, amid several pueblo villages. During the Spanish colonial period and into the mid-20th century the river served a complex network of irrigation canals (called acequias) supporting more than 1,000 acres of irrigated cropland.

Long-time residents remember fishing for trout in the river in downtown Santa Fe, building swimming holes and even ice-skating. But ask them precisely when the fishing stopped and the river dried up, and most can't recall. Over time, the river was turned off and on according to the demands of the city's water system and gradually the river was "off" more than it was "on." Fishing and swimming disappeared, and the community grew accustomed to a dry river channel.

For the past 20 years, the river has been used to fill the reservoirs in the upper reaches and as a drainage ditch to evacuate stormwater in the lower reaches. In addition, extensive urban growth in the Santa Fe area has rapidly increased demand for existing water supplies. In many reaches, the Santa Fe has ceased to function as a river, and the riparian ecosystem has largely dried up.

The results of the city's long neglect of its namesake river can be seen in the dry ditch littered with trash, overgrown with weeds and deeply eroded. Native vegetation along the river is in trouble and invasive species like Siberian elm are pushing out native cottonwoods and willows.

Looking at the dry riverbed today, it is hard to imagine that lush meadows and fine land for wildlife, crops and livestock once lined the course of the Santa Fe. Interlaced with old main stem acequias and secondary ditches called sangrías, the deep-rooted community supported by this system of veins and capillaries was a living embodiment of the Spanish saying "El agua es la sangre de la tierra" — "the water is the lifeblood of the land."

Pueblo ruins beside the river document its life-giving power stretching deep into the past, long before the arrival of Spanish conquistadores. Among current residents, many can trace their lineage back to those same soldiers, officers in the army of Spain who were awarded land along the river for their service. It was



JULIE WEST

ONCE THE LIFEblood OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES, THE SANTA FE RIVER NOW RUNS DRY FOR MOST OF THE YEAR.



DAVID GROENFELDT



RICH SCHRADER

good land, fertile land; land worth staking a claim that would last for generations.

Lining the banks of the flowing river was a vibrant bosque, a forest of cottonwoods and willows, a resource for both wildlife and people alike. Beyond the bosque, meadows supported decades of sustainable grazing and the river watered orchards, alfalfa fields and corn. This crop, both food and a powerful symbol to native peoples in the region, is still an integral part of the culture of the pueblos and acequias of northern New Mexico.

In the town of Agua Fria — Spanish for “cool water” — the river below Santa Fe gave life to a small community that traces its roots back to the early 17th century.

Then the lifeblood of this land disappeared, and with it much of the community and culture it had watered. The town of Agua Fria is a shadow of its former self, parched along with the riverbed. Without a flowing river, the water table sank, and wells had to reach deeper and deeper to find moisture. Without water in the river, sand and gravel miners chewed at the riverbed, and periodic flash floods ravaged the riverbanks that had lost their protective mantle of vegetation.

This rich life that the Santa Fe River once sustained is hardly ancient history; people alive today in Agua Fria remember the running river and the vibrant community it supported. Nor is it an impossible dream. Whenever there is a bounteous period of rain

or snow, and the reservoir gates are opened upstream, the river responds. This spring, following a favorable winter snowpack, the river may be flowing again, reminding New Mexicans what a living Santa Fe River once was, and could be again.

THE THREAT

The river has not had a fully natural flow of water since 1881, when the first dam was built to secure a steadier water supply for a growing Santa Fe. A series of successively larger dams came and went over the years, and today the river is fully impounded by twin reservoirs. The city of Santa Fe owns the dams, and holds the use rights to most of the surface water. The few remaining acequias also hold a small portion of the surface water rights. Both city-owned and private groundwater wells along the river extract water from the aquifer. No instream flow rights exist to support uses like recreation, or to protect important native fish and wildlife populations.

The major threat to the future of the Santa Fe River is the outdated assumption that a flowing river is a waste of water. Unfortunately, this attitude has kept the city from developing and implementing water efficiency steps and other measures that could guarantee enough water both for tap water and for the many other things the people of Santa Fe once enjoyed about the river.

The modern science of river management emphasizes natural river dynamics and water

THE CITY OF SANTA FE HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BRING THE SANTA FE RIVER BACK TO LIFE.



SANTA FE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION



DAVID GROENFELDT

CITIZENS OF SANTA FE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO RESTORE THEIR RIVER AND ITS IMPORTANT ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS.

cycles. Removing water from the river channel destroys not only water-dependent plants and animals, but also diminishes subsurface aquifers and local springs, some of which have disappeared entirely. All of these suffer when Santa Fe treats its river as an extension of the city's plumbing system that can be turned on and off (at the reservoirs) and as a dumping ground for polluted runoff in the lower reaches. And while Santa Fe has shown real leadership in the Southwest on water conservation, the city has not implemented a number of important steps that would mean more water for the river. For example, Santa Fe needs significantly better stormwater management, more efficient landscape irrigation and systems to capture more of the rain that falls on city roofs, parking lots and roads.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Without water in the river, the people of Santa Fe cannot reap the myriad economic, environmental, aesthetic, social and spiritual benefits a living river provides. The city now has a chance to restore the river to the forefront of community life. Restoring flows to the river

would provide not only a healthy ecosystem, but also a place for residents of Santa Fe to rejuvenate, visitors to enjoy and children to play. Tourism and art, which have attracted worldwide attention and serve as the two central pillars of the local economy, would benefit from a healthy Santa Fe River.

Local governments and non-profit groups are already working on a river trail system along the historic Camino Real, which ran along the Santa Fe River from the Rio Grande to the Spanish colonial capital in Santa Fe. A proposal for Santa Fe's historic downtown features the river as the centerpiece of a new park and community space. A natural, flowing Santa Fe River is an essential aspect of these public spaces. Fortunately, a number of coinciding factors — from Mayor David Coss' promise of a "living river" to Governor Bill Richardson's declaration of 2007 as the "Year of Water" in New Mexico — have set the stage for the river's revival.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

During the coming months, the community of Santa Fe has an unprecedented opportunity to bring back a living, flowing Santa Fe River. The city already has taken positive steps to lay out a long-range plan for flow restoration: First, the city council will decide whether to include a provision for a small flow in the river as part of its new long-range water plan. Second, the city plans to initiate the Santa Fe River Fund, a private-public match program to purchase water rights for the river, which, over the next decade or so, would guarantee



SANTA FE WATERSHED ASSOCIATION



THE CITY OF SANTA FE MUST COMMIT TO REAL RESTORATION OF THEIR NAMESAKE RIVER.

permanent water allocation for the river, incorporating both science and community desires to arrive at a significant and sustainable flow recommendation. The city may choose to scale up gradually to this recommended water allocation level, but it is essential to set a quantifiable target now, even if it would be realized only later, as part of the long-range water plan.

The future of the Santa Fe River is largely in the hands of the city of Santa Fe, which holds the water rights and controls dam releases. The city needs to make a clear commitment to restoring flow to the river, and then take advantage of a healthy Santa Fe River in planning and envisioning the future of the community.

TAKE ACTION

WWW.AMERICANRIVERS.ORG/ENDANGEREDRIVERS

CONTACT INFO

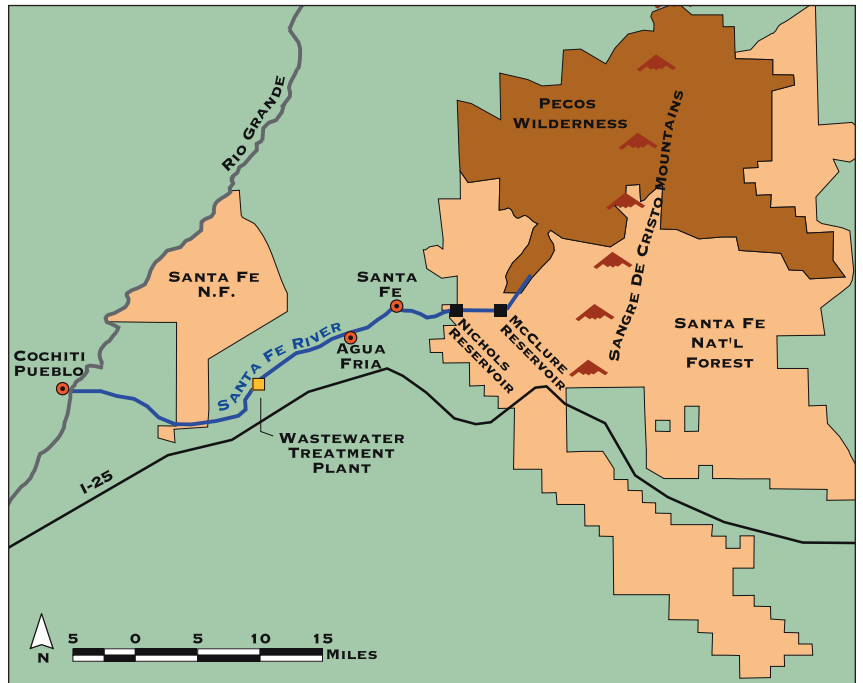
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legal water rights for instream flows.

Both of these steps are already in the works and together set the stage for eventually restoring the Santa Fe River. But planning for the long term, while necessary, is not sufficient. Indeed, Santa Fe has seen past goals for flow restoration derailed by the relentless water demands of new development. Long-term planning won't bring back the Santa Fe River unless those plans include near-term commitments to instream flow, linked with clear, measurable goals for how much water the city will commit to a living river. In the coming year, the city needs to take two crucial, short-term steps to bring the river back to life:

- ◆ First, and most urgently, the city must explicitly allocate some minimal releases to the river as immediate relief for the river ecosystem. Putting water in the river now is an essential down payment on the city's long-term plans.
- ◆ Second, the city must make good on that down payment by setting and implementing a



#2 SAN MATEO CREEK

THREAT: PROPOSED HIGHWAY

SUMMARY

At the center of the last remaining pristine coastal watershed in southern California, San Mateo Creek supports world-class surfing and the southern-most population of endangered steelhead trout. But relentless highway development threatens San Mateo Creek and the very heart of America's surf culture. A proposed toll road would slice through San Mateo Creek, causing significant damage to the watershed and to surfing at the famous Trestles Beach, whose reef depends upon the San Mateo for sand and cobbles. Unless the California Coastal Commission and other state and federal agencies deny permits for this toll road, southern California runs the risk of losing one of its best remaining natural and recreational assets.

THE RIVER

San Mateo Creek is one of the last free-flowing, undiverted streams in southern California, and is a natural haven amidst large-scale, high density development. Unspoiled San Mateo Creek is at the heart of some of the world's rarest habitat and is a hotspot for species diversity, supporting a host of endangered and threatened species including the southern steelhead trout, arroyo chub and unarmored threespine stickleback — three nearly extinct species of native fish.

The lower three miles of the creek lie

within San Onofre State Beach, with Trestles Beach at the mouth. Trestles is a world-famous surfing spot and is the only stop in the continental United States for the World Championship Tour of professional surfing. Considered the "Yosemite of Surfing," San Onofre State Beach is the fifth most visited state park in California, drawing more than 2 million visitors each year. A large segment of the global \$6.5 billion surf and surf wear industry is based in Orange County and San Clemente, partly because of the proximity to Trestles and San Onofre.

THE THREAT

The proposed \$850 million, 16-mile long toll road, known as the Foothill Transportation Corridor South (FTC-South), would cut directly through San Mateo Creek and San Onofre State Beach. Despite internal studies casting serious doubt about the project's ability to actually reduce traffic congestion and external studies showing that widening the existing I-5 freeway and adjacent arterial roads would provide more traffic relief, the Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA) are moving forward with construction of the toll road.

If built, the toll road would have massive impacts on southern California's last remaining pristine coastal watershed and substantially degrade habitat vital to the survival of endangered species that live in the state park. The FTC-South would require enormous alteration of the hillsides and terrain in the park, as well as millions of yards of hard reinforcement (steel, concrete and other materials), which would permanently change the natural sediment and water flow from San Mateo Creek. According to the TCA's own engineering consultants, changes in sedimentation flow would cause "substantial degradation to surfing resources," which will likely result in significant degradation of wave quality at Lower Trestles and nearby breaks. These changes to the sedimentation regime and water quality will also damage the creek bottom habitats and alter the natural systems that support the vast biological diversity found there.



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A HEALTHY SAN MATEO CREEK NOW FEEDS TRESTLES BEACH, KNOWN AS THE "YOSEMITE OF SURFING."



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WHAT'S AT STAKE

San Mateo Creek is part of one of the last largely undeveloped coastal watersheds in southern California, forming the backbone of a very complex ecosystem. In the heart of one of America's most populated, developed areas, San Mateo Creek and San Onofre State Beach are an oasis of respite and world-class recreation, and provide irreplaceable habitat for a wide range of fish and wildlife.

Orange County and San Clemente reap bountiful economic benefits from surfing-related tourism and retail sales. As one of California's most popular state parks, San Onofre attracts residents, visitors, surfers, swimmers, campers, kayakers, birders, fishermen, off-duty Marines, bicyclists and sunbathers to its natural beauty and first-rate recreational opportunities. San Mateo Creek lies at the heart of the scenic sanctuary that serves this wide community of enthusiasts. It is vital to protect this incredible resource that provides astounding economic, recreational and ecological benefits to local communities and wildlife.

SAVESANONOFRE.COM



WHAT MUST BE DONE

A number of key decisions will be made in 2007. The TCA will complete the federally-required Environmental Impact Statement, which must then be approved and adopted by the Federal Highway Administration. The California Coastal Commission will determine whether to issue a Coastal Development permit for construction of the toll road. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will decide whether to issue a Clean Water Act 404 permit to allow construction in wetlands and other waters, and the California Department of Fish and Game will decide whether to issue a California Fish and Game Code 1601 streambed alteration permit. In carrying out their responsibilities, both the Federal Highway Administration and the Corps of Engineers will have to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding potential impacts on federally threatened and endangered species. Each of these agencies should withhold its approval of the project because the toll road will cause significant harm to the resources the agencies are empowered to protect, and to one of southern California's best remaining natural treasures.



TAKE ACTION

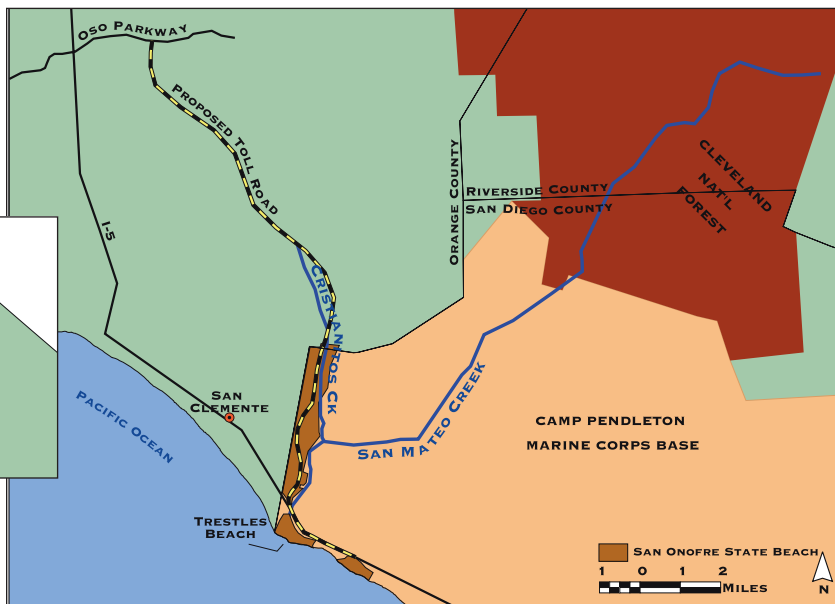
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THE PROPOSED HIGHWAY
WILL DESTROY ONE OF
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA'S
BEST REMAINING NATURAL
AND RECREATIONAL
RESOURCES.



#3 IOWA RIVER

THREAT: WEAK ENFORCEMENT OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT

SUMMARY

It's hard to imagine that residents of Iowa City would drink from or swim in the Iowa River if they had any choice in the matter. A host of polluters that include large concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), municipal and industrial wastewater treatment facilities, and small rural communities without public sewers, inundate the river with toxins, nitrates, phosphorous and untreated sewage containing viruses, bacteria and other pathogens. Unfortunately, the state of Iowa trails far behind the rest of the country in implementing and enforcing the federal Clean Water Act. Unless the state wants water quality in the Iowa and other rivers to deteriorate even further, Iowa must develop stronger Clean Water Act regulations and provide its Department of Natural Resources (DNR) sufficient funding to enforce these regulations.

THE RIVER

The Iowa River meanders through the central part of the state, beginning near the northern border before heading east where it flows directly into the Mississippi River. Otters, beavers, raptors and water snakes depend upon the river, which also supports a vast warm water recreational fishery. The river and its environs are home to several endangered species including the Indiana bat, long-bracted orchid and numerous species of mussels, including the Higgins' eye pearly mussel,

whose numbers continue to decrease as pollution in the river worsens.

Nearby communities enjoy recreation on the Iowa River, including power boating, paddle sports, fishing, hunting and swimming. Vacation cabins and state parks are found up and down the river. Roughly 180,000 people in Cedar Rapids and Iowa City depend upon the Iowa and its major tributary, the Cedar River, for drinking water. The Iowa River was also extremely important for Native Americans (Sioux, Potawatomi, Winnebago and Iowa) living near the river, providing transportation, stones for tools and a natural trap for buffalo that were driven over the cliffs.

THE THREAT

The health of the Iowa River, emblematic of so many of the state's rivers, is in serious jeopardy. The Iowa and Cedar rivers have fifteen river segments included on the state's list of impaired waters. The main pollutants causing these impairments are nitrates, fecal bacteria, and sediment that originate from farm fields, livestock farms, industries and town sewer systems, among others. Iowa is far behind in implementing and enforcing the Clean Water Act to reduce and eliminate pollution being discharged into the rivers. Although it would seem like common sense to at least maintain current water quality levels when considering new or expanded pollution sources, Iowa has yet to adopt a key provision of the Clean Water Act that triggers such a review. More than 30 years after Congress passed the Clean Water Act, Iowa has still not adopted these anti-degradation rules. As a result, state agencies routinely issue permits allowing new or increased pollution loads to be discharged into rivers without the required review of the impacts on river water quality.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

The Iowa River and its tributaries are a boon to local economies, providing drinking water for hundreds of thousands of people, and offering a valued setting for numerous recreational activities. Even in its current diminished state, the river is a valuable resource for Eldora, Cedar Rapids, Iowa City and other commu-



CLAY SMITH, IOWA DNR

LYING HAZARDOUSLY CLOSE TO THE WEAVING OXBOWS OF THE IOWA RIVER, LIVESTOCK FARMS LIKE THE ONE SHOWN BELOW CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANT POLLUTION TO THE IOWA AND OTHER RIVERS IN THE STATE.



IOWA ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

nities along its banks. If water quality continues to decline, people who depend on the river for drinking water and recreation will face higher water treatment costs, while losing recreation-generated economic benefits.

Recent surveys have documented a precipitous decline in freshwater mussels living in the Iowa and Cedar rivers, raising new alarm about water quality. Because mussels are more sensitive to pollution than fish and other aquatic life, they serve as the “canaries” alerting us to problematic pollution levels. Living up to the promise of the Clean Water Act will

dramatically increase the health and value of the Iowa and other rivers to communities throughout the state.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

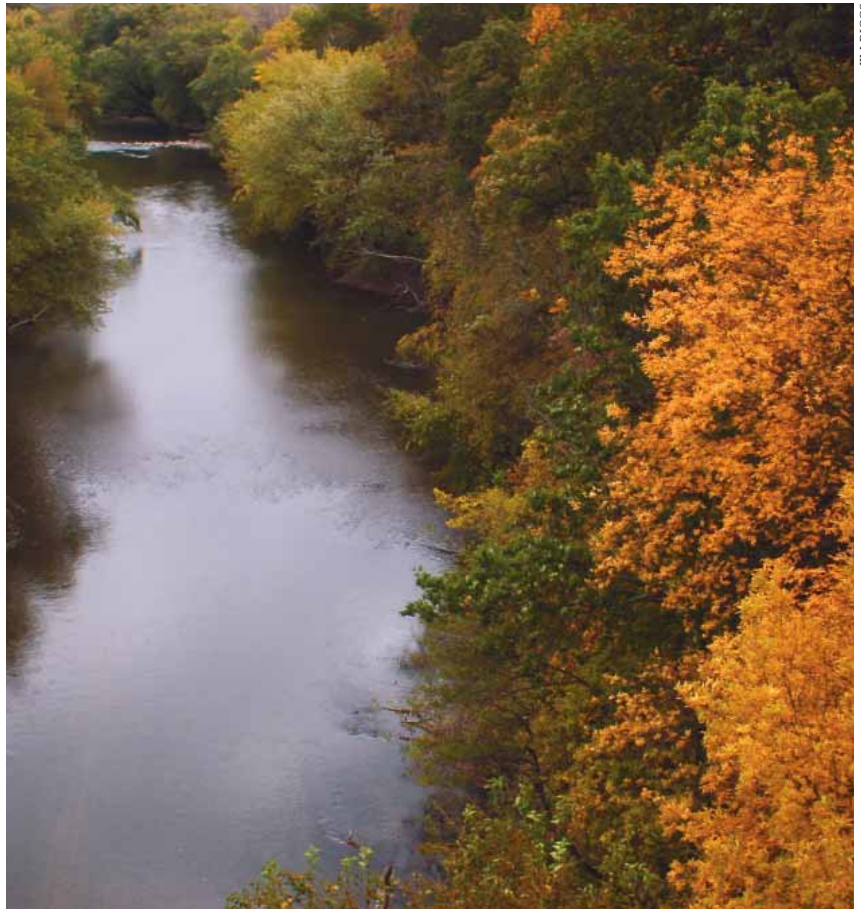
The Iowa DNR is currently in the process of writing anti-degradation rules that must be finalized by the state agency, and then approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. These rules are needed now to ensure that future wastewater permits will reduce pollution loads being discharged into the Iowa and Cedar rivers instead of further degrading water quality. The DNR is scheduled to finish drafting the rules and to begin the official process of adopting them in June 2007. The DNR should not delay this process, but should prioritize the adoption and finalization of these rules in June. Furthermore, the agency should only issue wastewater discharge permits that require cities to decrease the pollution loads they deposit into the Iowa River, rather than sanctioning the further degradation of the state’s namesake river.

TAKE ACTION

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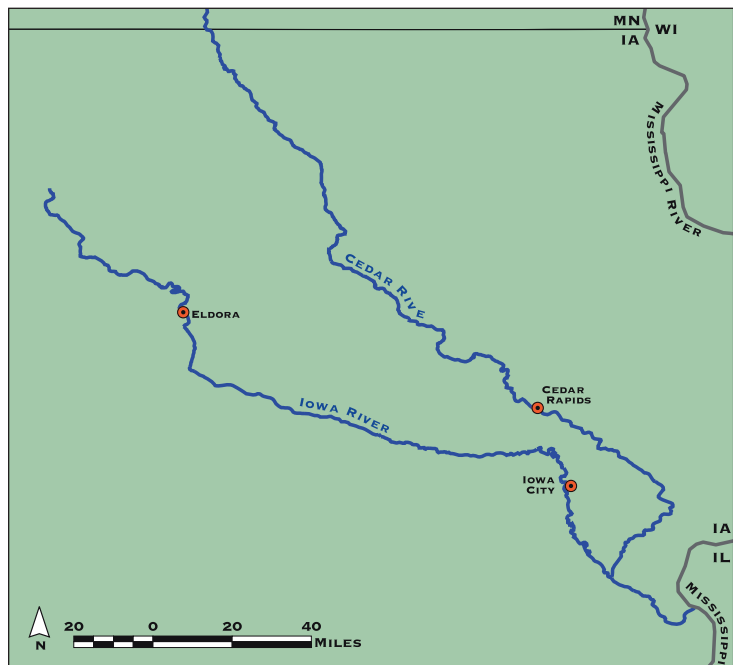
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JIM RIGGS

THE IOWA DNR MUST ADHERE TO THE CLEAN WATER ACT AND REDUCE POLLUTION BEING DISCHARGED INTO THE IOWA RIVER.



#4 UPPER DELAWARE RIVER

THREAT: PROPOSED POWER LINE

SUMMARY

One of America's first Wild and Scenic Rivers, the Upper Delaware River now faces a threat that would not only harm the river, but set a chilling precedent for the rest of our nation's river treasures. A corporation has proposed a massive new power line that would cut through the Upper Delaware River corridor, undermining the river's outstanding natural characteristics that support the local tourism-based economy. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) must respect the federal protection afforded the Upper Delaware by keeping the power line out.

THE RIVER

In many ways, the Scenic and Recreational Upper Delaware River was an obvious choice as one of America's first Wild and Scenic Rivers. Unobstructed from Hancock to Port Jervis, New York, the river winds through forests and farmland, past cliffs and villages, providing habitat that supports abundant wildlife populations, including bald eagles. The river supports world-class trout fishing as well as American shad, striped bass and river herring.

The scenic beauty of the Delaware River and valley is readily accessible by millions of people who live within 150 miles of the river. More than 500,000 people are drawn to the

river annually to take part in the recreational opportunities available, including sightseeing, boating, camping, hunting, fishing, hiking and bird watching. Not surprisingly, tourism is the largest industry in the region, providing jobs to 10 percent of the local population and \$65 million to the local economy in Pike County, Pennsylvania. In Sullivan County, New York, the year-round population more than triples on typical summer weekends.

Additionally, more than 17 million people get drinking water from the Delaware River basin, including New York City and Philadelphia residents.

THE THREAT

New York Regional Interconnect, Inc. (NYRI) is proposing an electric transmission corridor in the Upper Delaware River Valley. The proposed 1,200 megawatt high-voltage power line would begin in New York near Utica and extend 190 miles to Rock Tavern in Orange County, following the Upper Delaware River for 73.4 miles. The transmission corridor would require clear-cutting all trees and vegetation and regular spraying of herbicides within a 100-foot wide swath along the river, harming fish and eliminating significant amounts of wildlife habitat and beneficial vegetation along the river's edge. The proposed power line would also cross numerous streams, creeks and other wetlands along the river. Moreover, the power line construction would also require buying out local landowners and taking property by eminent domain.

Construction of this power line would do irreparable harm not only to the Upper Delaware, but would set a bad precedent for the management of all rivers in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Indeed, the 1986 Wild and Scenic River management plan for the Upper Delaware specifically rejects major electric transmission lines within the river corridor as an "incompatible use." Ignoring that clear direction and doing permanent damage to the unique values that led to the Upper Delaware's inclusion in the System in 1978 would threaten the ability of river managers around the country to protect our unique Wild and Scenic Rivers.



DAVID B. SOETE

THE UPPER DELAWARE RIVER PROVIDES A RECREATIONAL HAVEN FOR THE REGION.



DAVID B. SOETE

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Congress originally included the Upper Delaware River in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System for its scenic, recreational, historic, environmental and cultural assets. The intent was to protect this corridor for the enjoyment and benefit of present and future generations. The power line would diminish recreational opportunities and the revenue they generate for local communities, and would decrease property values. It would cause harm to the river and the wildlife it supports, and it would undermine the spirit of the National Wild and Scenic designation for rivers across America.

New York state does need to address the reliability of its electric transmission system, but it needs to be done in an environmentally responsible manner that respects the rights of local communities and property owners and serves the public interest. The NYRI proposal does not meet that standard. Alternatives including locating the power line along other pre-existing transmission corridors would be significantly less damaging to the local economy and wildlife.



DAVID B. SOETE

WHAT MUST BE DONE

The DOE is considering an application to designate the Upper Delaware River Valley as part of a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC), which would allow NYRI to circumvent New York state's review and permitting process. The DOE should reject this application. The proposed project would lie almost entirely within New York state, and the New York State Public Service Commission permitting process should not be trumped by a NIETC designation that would be squarely at odds with the river's National Wild and Scenic designation.

Furthermore, to ensure the reliability of New York state's electricity system, the DOE should look at the recommendations from New York state's regional transmission planning organization, the Independent System Operator (NYISO). All alternatives that do not endanger a valuable public resource should be fully evaluated and considered.

TAKE ACTION

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SCARRING THE UPPER DELAWARE WITH A POWER LINE WOULD VIOLATE THE RIVER'S WILD AND SCENIC CHARACTER.

#5 WHITE SALMON RIVER

THREAT: CONDIT DAM

SUMMARY

There is incredible potential for the White Salmon River to once again be home to abundant wild salmon and steelhead runs. But before this vision can be realized, the 94 year-old Condit Dam, which blocks all salmon and steelhead from most of the river, must be removed. Not only is dam removal the best choice for the river ecosystem, it also makes economic sense. The time for action is now: the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) must issue a dam removal order that respects a carefully negotiated multi-party settlement agreement calling for dam removal in 2008. This is an extraordinary restoration opportunity we simply cannot afford to miss.

THE RIVER

From the snowy slopes of Mount Adams in southwest Washington, the White Salmon River flows 45 miles to its confluence with the Columbia River, just upstream of Bonneville Dam. More than 20 miles of the White Salmon River are federally designated as Wild and Scenic and the lower 3.3 miles of the river are part of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.

The rich natural resources and beauty of the area support multiple industries including agriculture, timber, recreation and tourism. Fea-

turing steep, breathtaking canyons and continuous rapids, the White Salmon is nationally recognized as a premier whitewater destination. Ten outfitters run commercial trips on the river, and at least 25,000 boaters use the White Salmon each year, bringing an important economic influx to the local community.

Before Condit Dam was built, the White Salmon River was home to abundant runs of salmon and steelhead that provided an important source of food, as well as spiritual and cultural values to the Native Americans of the area.

THE THREAT

Built in 1913 to generate hydropower, Condit Dam played an important role in the history and development of the area. But the benefits have come with a high cost to the river's integrity. The 125-foot tall dam has no fish passage, limiting salmon and steelhead to the lower three miles of river. The dam disrupts natural river flows, as well as the movement of spawning gravel and large woody debris, which are important habitat building-blocks. Condit Dam is a leading reason why the river's salmon and steelhead populations are listed as threatened or endangered.

Condit Dam produces little electricity (an average of 10 megawatts, which is only 0.001 percent of dam owner PacifiCorp's total power production) and a 2002 study conducted for the local public utility district concluded that the dam is not cost-effective. Independent analysis by PacifiCorp similarly concluded that operating the dam under modern requirements — including basic protections under the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act — does not make economic sense. Faced with the mounting costs of operating the aging dam, PacifiCorp signed an agreement in 1999 with diverse interests including conservation and recreation groups, the Yakama Indian Nation and government agencies, to remove the dam.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

As long as Condit Dam remains standing, it will prevent the restoration of a healthy river ecosystem. For runs of salmon and steelhead to thrive, Condit Dam must be removed. The Bio-



THOMAS O'KEEFE

DAM REMOVAL IS NOT ONLY THE BEST CHOICE FOR THE RIVER ECOSYSTEM, IT ALSO MAKES ECONOMIC SENSE.



NICHOLAS O'NEIL



THOMAS O'KEEFE

Salmon River, FERC must regulate the decommissioning of a hydropower dam for the greater public interest.

FERC should responsibly serve this interest by identifying the specific actions that need to be taken to support this remarkable restoration opportunity. It must lay out a clear and achievable path that honors the carefully crafted settlement agreement and keeps the dam removal schedule on track for 2008.

RESTORING A FREE-FLOWING WHITE SALMON RIVER WILL BOLSTER SALMON RECOVERY EFFORTS AND BOOST RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

TAKE ACTION

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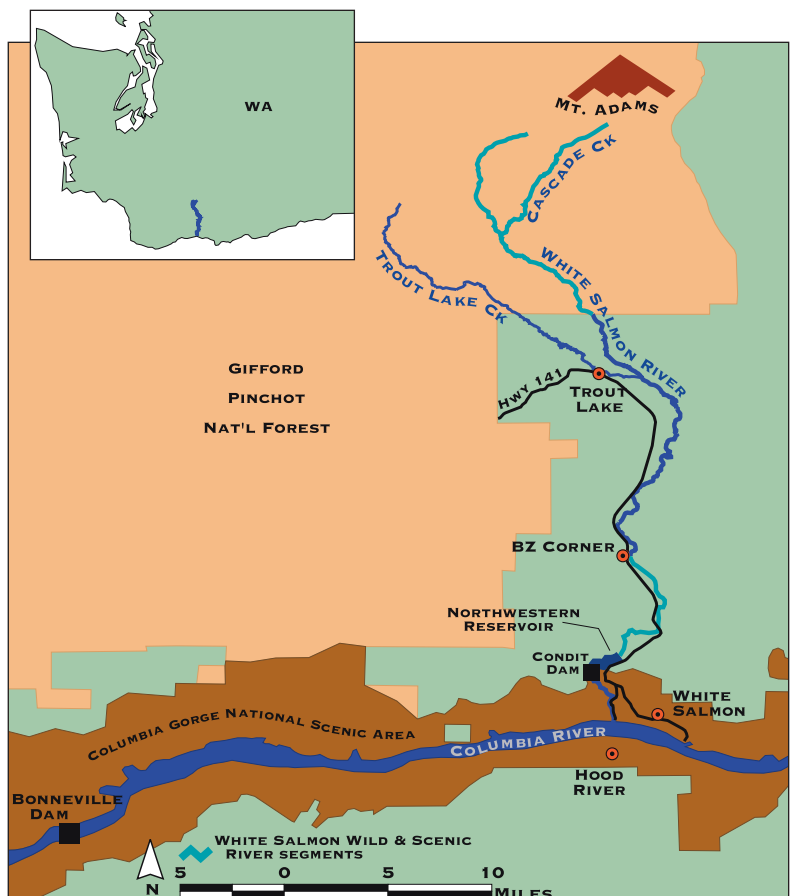
logical Opinion issued by the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries cautions that leaving the dam in place could lead to the “long-term decline” and increased risk of extinction of listed salmon and steelhead. NOAA calls dam removal “the most fail-safe method to safely pass fish through the project area.”

PacifiCorp is taking responsibility for removal and has agreed to cover the costs of dam deconstruction and river restoration. Removing the dam will give salmon access to 14 miles and steelhead access to 33 miles of cold, clean, high-quality habitat in the White Salmon. Runs are predicted to be re-established by 2030, giving a boost to regional salmon recovery efforts and allowing for the restoration of tribal fishing opportunities. Salmon will become a nutrient-rich food source for wildlife including osprey and bald eagle.

The recreation and tourism industries will also benefit from a restored river. Dam removal will open up five additional miles of river for rafting and kayaking and will create additional recreational opportunities on the river.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

FERC oversees the operation of non-federal hydropower dams. In the case of the White



#6 NECHES RIVER

THREAT: PROPOSED DAM PROJECTS

SUMMARY

The Neches River, one of the last wild rivers in Texas, will drown behind a new dam if water developers get their way. The Texas Water Development Board and the city of Dallas are trying to overturn protection for the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge and convert the area into a huge reservoir that would flood a 40-mile stretch of river. The Texas Legislature should reject schemes to designate the refuge area as a reservoir site and help prevent the demise of one of the Lone Star state's last best rivers.

THE RIVER

Flowing hundreds of miles through beautiful bottomland hardwood forests, the Neches River is Texas' largest contiguous riverine habitat, supporting more than 200 tree species, 47 mammal, 300 bird, and numerous species of reptiles, amphibians, freshwater mussels and fish, many of which are listed as endangered and threatened by Texas and the United States. The mocha-colored river is a celebration of Texas' natural heritage. It winds through many premiere natural areas, including the newly approved Neches River National Wildlife Refuge, the Big Thicket National Preserve — also an International Biosphere Reserve — national forests, wilderness areas and the Sabine Lake estuary.



ADRIAN VAN DELLEN

RECREATION IS ONE OF MANY BENEFITS THE NECHES RIVER PROVIDES TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES.



ADRIAN VAN DELLEN

Freshwater flows from the Neches River maintain Sabine Lake's balance of fresh and salt water, which supports multi-million dollar commercial and recreational fishing and shellfish industries. Texas residents enjoy fishing, swimming and bird-watching in and along the river. Area paddlers host canoe trips and races on the Neches, bringing paddlers from across Texas and out-of-state, contributing significantly to local economies.



THE THREAT

Last year, in recognition of the area's outstanding natural, recreational and ecological values, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge. However, the Texas Water Development Board and the city of Dallas have other plans for the Neches' water. They have filed suit to stop further establishment of the refuge and are lobbying hard for approval of the proposed Fastrill Reservoir. The Fastrill project would dam the river and drown most of the 25,000 acres of the refuge. But this is just the most immediate threat to the Neches — two other proposed water development projects would flood an additional 140,000 acres of forested wetlands. Proponents of Fastrill and other reservoirs on the Neches identify them as potential future sources of water supply, though the 2007 Texas State Water Plan shows that existing reservoirs are sufficient to meet needs until at least 2060.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Drowning thousands of acres of bottomland hardwood forest would have massive consequences for wildlife, recreation and the industries that depend upon a healthy Neches River. Damming the Neches and reducing the flood flows would dry up both the Big Thicket National Preserve and the multi-million dollar

commercial and recreational fishing industries off the Texas Gulf Coast.

The reservoirs would also hamper or eliminate many other important recreational activities in the area. Fastrill Reservoir would flood an historic and recreational attraction — the Texas State Railroad — which offers a 90 minute journey through the countryside and bottomland forests of the Neches via a steam-powered locomotive. The reservoir would force the train and two state parks to close, stripping more than \$5.5 million annually from local economies. Also lost would be treasured Neches River hunting club memberships — often passed on for generations within families and priceless to those who belong.

Ensuring water supply for the city of Dallas and other Texas cities and towns is extremely important. But it makes little sense to site unnecessary reservoirs in an area that generates plentiful economic revenue and supports one of the most biologically diverse and important wildlife regions in Texas. The Dallas area is one of the most wasteful water users in the country, with municipal water use that is significantly higher than other major cities in Texas. Using existing reservoirs and straightforward conservation measures are more cost-effective alternatives that will not rob local residents and wildlife of the outstanding jewel they have in the Neches River.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

The Texas Legislature will vote on a bill by May 2007 that would designate the Fastrill Reservoir area as a “unique reservoir site.” This odd designation would make it difficult for state or local governments to use this and other sites for anything but future dams and reservoirs. The Legislature should deny designation of the so-called unique reservoir site, and instead support the Neches River National Wildlife Refuge.

Additionally, to ensure protection of this precious river, the U.S. Department of Interior should proceed with buying land for the Neches Refuge and the Texas Congressional delegation should take the lead on legislation to designate the Neches River as a National Scenic River through the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. This designation would ensure that the free-flowing beauty of the Neches remains protected while providing access to future generations of hunters, anglers and paddlers.

ADRIAN VAN DELLEN



TAKE ACTION

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DAMMING THE NECHES RIVER IS AN EXPENSIVE AND WASTEFUL WAY TO SUPPLY WATER TO TEXAS RESIDENTS, ESPECIALLY WHEN SENSIBLE ALTERNATIVES EXIST.



#7 KINNICKINNIC RIVER

THREAT: TOXIC SEDIMENTS

SUMMARY

Like many urban rivers across the country, the Kinnickinnic River has been neglected — laced with toxic contamination, lined with concrete, degraded and ignored. Extensive efforts and studies have highlighted these problems, and many local organizations and agencies have made Kinnickinnic River restoration a top priority. The local community has come together in an effort to cleanup the river and reclaim some of the economic, ecological and recreational benefits the Kinnickinnic once provided. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) should capitalize on this momentum and grant the funding necessary to support restoration efforts, rather than losing this opportunity to bring the river back to life.

THE RIVER

At 33 square miles and 96 percent urban land cover, the Kinnickinnic River is the smallest and most developed watershed in the Milwaukee River basin — a watershed that covers approximately 850 square miles and is home to more than 1.5 million people. The Kinnickinnic River, which lies almost entirely in the city of Milwaukee, empties into the

Milwaukee Estuary and then Lake Michigan. The entire Milwaukee Estuary has been designated as a Federal Area of Concern (AoC), including 2.8 miles of the Kinnickinnic River from Lake Michigan to Chase Avenue, due to toxic contaminants and urbanization of the river.

The Kinnickinnic River is located in one of the most populated, racially diverse and poorest areas of the city of Milwaukee. The communities around the river endure poor water quality, a lack of recreational opportunities, and diminished and unsafe access to the river. Once consisting of a vast marsh, a vibrant crawfish fishery and multitudes of shipyards, the river still remains vital to the local boating industry, though the build up of contaminated sediment severely hampers all boating activities, both recreational and commercial.

THE THREAT

The Kinnickinnic River has fallen victim to the familiar threats that harm urban rivers, including concrete channelization (and the resulting disappearance of natural vegetation and streambanks), sewer overflows and industrial contamination. Most significantly, the fast pace of urban development between the 1900s and 1970s coupled with a lack of regulation led to toxic pollution of the Kinnickinnic River, manifested in sediments contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).

Today, fish consumption warnings are in effect for all fish species in the Milwaukee Estuary AoC, including the Kinnickinnic River and Lake Michigan, putting community residents at risk from all fishing activities. Even if people wanted to fish, their casts would be largely unsuccessful — fish populations are small and the river contains the lowest fish diversity within the Milwaukee Estuary. Concentrations of toxins in AoC sediments are similar to concentrations found at other sites where fish have high cancer rates. In addition to PCBs and PAHs, polluted stormwater runoff and the shortage of natural streambanks and suitable habitat are major limiting factors for fish and wildlife.



EDDIE DANIEL

THE COMMUNITY IS RALLYING BEHIND THE KINNICKINNIC IN HOPES OF RECLAIMING THE BENEFITS THE RIVER ONCE PROVIDED.



EDDIE DANIEL

Boaters increasingly cannot use the Kinnickinnic River due to low water levels caused by sedimentation. Current water levels are 0 to 10 feet below Lake Michigan baseline low water elevations, which makes boating hazardous. Dredging is restricted due to high contaminant levels in the sediments, and local marina owners are losing water and business.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Although the Kinnickinnic River has often been overlooked in the past due to the overwhelming nature of its problems and the tremendous financial resources needed to address them, the residents and communities living in the watershed now have the chance to see the river rejuvenated, and to reclaim the benefits the river once provided to people, business, fish and wildlife. For the first time, citizens, organizations and businesses from the local community are joining together to realize the economic and environmental potential of the Kinnickinnic River through the removal of contaminated sediment. If this restoration project is not pursued, the city of Milwaukee will lose out on the wide array of benefits that a healthier Kinnickinnic River would provide.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, working in partnership with the EPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Port of Milwaukee, is examining the feasibility of removing contaminated sediments from a portion of the lower Kinnickinnic River, thus improving environmental and navigation conditions. The project would remove up to 170,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediments from a 2,000 foot stretch of river. These sediments are the most upstream source of contamination, and their removal will provide short and long-term environmental and economic benefits to both the river and the city. These benefits include substantial reduction of toxic sediment resuspension and transport into the Kinnickinnic River and Lake Michigan; a reduction of sediment toxicity and the risks it poses to human health and aquatic life; improvement of wildlife habitat; an increase in recreational and commercial boating; and improved redevelopment potential. The EPA should provide Great Lakes Legacy Act funding for this project that restores and reclaims the Kinnickinnic River as a vital community asset.



FRIENDS OF MILWAUKEE'S RIVERS

TAKE ACTION

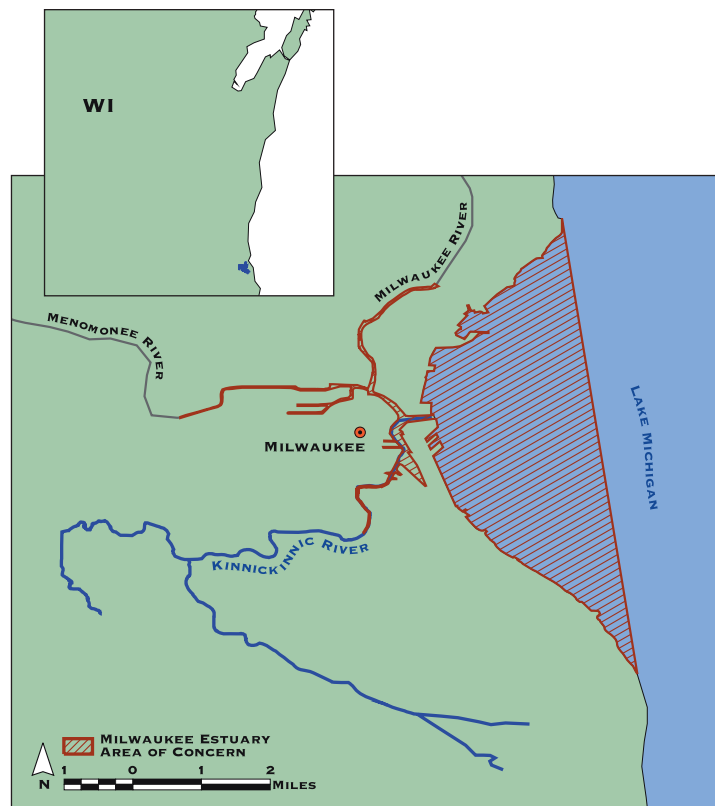
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TOXIC SEDIMENTS SEVERELY HAMPER BOATING AND RECREATION IN THE KINNICKINNIC RIVER AND SHOULD BE REMOVED.



#8 NEUSE RIVER

THREAT: POORLY PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY

It would be hard to match the damage done to the waters of the Neuse River by massive hog operations in the watershed, but if developers get their way, human sewage, stormwater runoff and habitat destruction could earn that dubious distinction. With sprawling coastal development creeping inland, and urban growth in the headwaters, the Neuse is the new frontier for poorly planned development. The North Carolina Division of Water Quality (NCDWQ) must tackle the issue; otherwise human sewage, polluted runoff and other municipal pollution will soon present a problem as serious as runoff from factory hog operations.

THE RIVER

Beginning near Durham, the Neuse River flows through Raleigh and empties into Pamlico Sound. Despite suffering from decades of pollution, many endangered species including the Carolina madtom (a freshwater catfish), Tar River spiny mussel, piping plover, dwarf wedge mussel and loggerhead turtle remain in the Neuse River basin. Dolphins and alligators are seen regularly in the estuary, and sharks and manatees occasionally appear as far upriver as New Bern.

The Neuse, whose name is derived from the Neusiok — a Native American tribe that inhabited the New Bern area — has a rich history of human interaction. With more than 3,400 miles of tributaries, the river flows 250 miles from the Piedmont to Pamlico Sound. Approximately 2 million people, one-sixth of

the state's population, reside in the basin. The river, via Falls Lake, provides drinking water to 400,000 Raleigh-area residents and its estuary serves as a primary nursery for commercially and recreationally important fish and shellfish. Water sports such as kayaking and sailing as well as other forms of tourism are important economic drivers for the region.

THE THREAT

For many years, nutrient-laden waste from millions of hogs living in concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) in the state's Coastal Plain has overloaded the entire Neuse basin with nitrogen, phosphorus and ammonia. Excessive amounts of these nutrients feed explosive algal growth, which depletes oxygen in the water and has caused some of the largest fish kills in the nation. Nutrients from hogs and other sources have also led to outbreaks of Pfiesteria, a tiny one-celled organism that produces a neurotoxin deadly to fish and exceedingly harmful to humans.

A growing basin-wide threat is poised to exacerbate the problems associated with factory hog production. Now that the Atlantic Coast is saturated with homes and buildings, residential development is creeping up along rivers and tributaries into many counties that have been collectively identified as the "Inner Coast." With population in the Neuse River basin projected to increase by one million in the next 20 years, major developments are being proposed in both the upper and lower watersheds.

This threat is far-reaching and multifaceted. Sediment running off poorly managed developments significantly degrades water quality, but the problems continue even after construction ends. Greater populations generate more nitrogen from human and pet wastes, lawn fertilizers and auto exhausts. The spread of paved surfaces leads to huge surges in polluted runoff after storms. New construction can also harm or completely destroy vital wetlands and protective buffers along rivers. In response to projected growth, an alarming number of municipalities are not only targeting the Neuse for increased drinking water withdrawals, but also as a depository for additional sewage discharges.



WWW.DOVENAGING.COM

RUNAWAY DEVELOPMENT IS POISED TO RIVAL LARGE-SCALE HOG FARMING AS THE TOP POLLUTER IN THE NEUSE RIVER BASIN.



DEAN NAUDOKS

WHAT'S AT STAKE

While state and federally mandated pollution reductions have been implemented in recent years, the benefits to the health of the Neuse River have been minimal. Now, runaway development threatens to negate any progress made in improving water quality. Upstream discharges and development have already landed Falls Lake, the second largest drinking water reservoir in the state, on the 2008 list of impaired waters from excessive nutrients. The building boom is also destroying the cultural heritage of eastern North Carolina as family-owned fishing piers and fish houses are demolished to make way for condominiums. North Carolina risks losing the cultural legacy of these water-dependent communities.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

As sewage and wastewater treatment facilities reach capacity, counties throughout the Neuse River basin are gearing up to request permits to increase wastewater discharges into the river. The city of Raleigh and many counties in the upper watershed are planning to expand their sewage discharges. These activities will require permits from the NCDWQ. Rulings could come as early as summer 2007. The state agency must resist pressure to hand out more pollution permits without fully evaluating the cumulative impacts to the entire Neuse River. Furthermore, discharge permits for virtually all sewage treatment plants in the Neuse River basin come up for renewal in 2008. This is an important opportunity to clean up the river.

Second, a moratorium on new large-scale hog operations in eastern North Carolina ends in August 2007. Alternative technologies have



been developed and are available to replace lagoons and spray fields. In 2007, the North Carolina Legislature must implement a permanent ban on new lagoons and spray fields, and require the phasing out of existing lagoons and spray fields over a five-year period.

THE NEUSE RIVER IS AN INCREDIBLE NATURAL RESOURCE, PROVIDING NORTH CAROLINIANS WITH DRINKING WATER, REVENUE, RECREATION AND RELAXATION.

TAKE ACTION

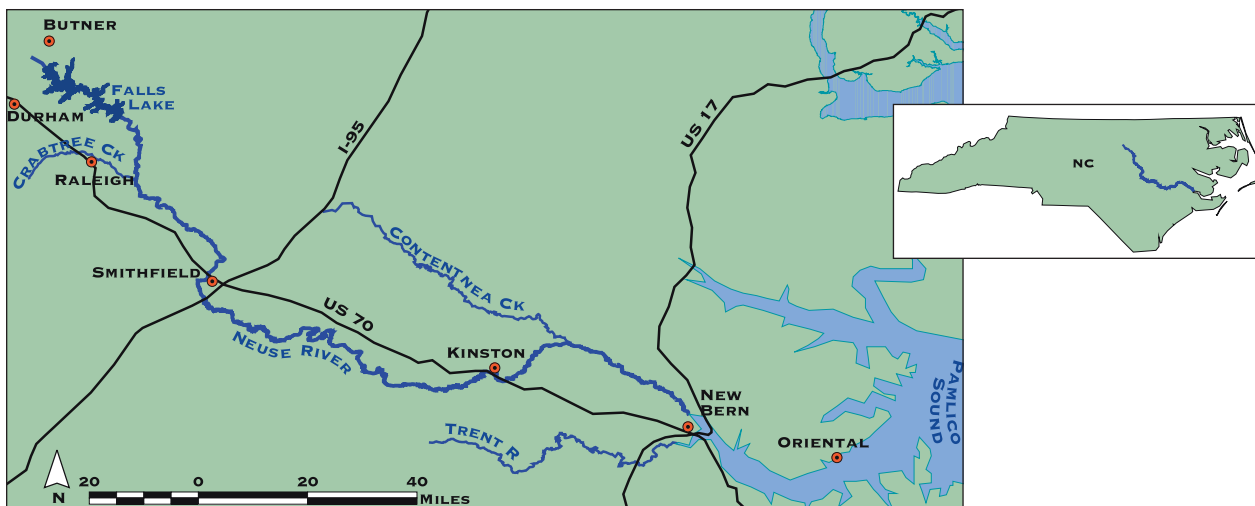
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#9 LEE CREEK

THREAT: PROPOSED DAM AND WEAKENED STATE PROTECTION FOR RIVERS

SUMMARY

A regional water district is proposing to wreck Lee Creek with a new dam, even though cheaper and more ecologically-sound alternatives exist for water supply. Even worse, the water district is attempting to weaken protection for all of Arkansas' rivers in an effort to make it easier to get the dam. The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) must uphold the laws guarding the state's pristine rivers, and protect Lee Creek from this unnecessary and harmful dam.

THE RIVER

Originating in the northwest corner of Arkansas, Lee Creek journeys into Oklahoma before reentering Arkansas and reaching its confluence with the state's namesake river. The creek rushes beneath the mystical Ozark Mountains, braving steep mountain gorges and canyons, and offering a home for at least 123 macro-invertebrate and 37 fish species, including smallmouth bass and other sport fish. Both states officially recognize the ecological and aesthetic values of Lee Creek — it enjoys state Scenic protection in Oklahoma, and state-designated Extraordinary Resource Waterway protection in Arkansas.

Lee Creek currently provides drinking water for roughly 273,000 people in Fort Smith, Arkansas and surrounding areas. A highlight of Devil's Den State Park, Lee Creek is also a

very popular recreational destination for hiking, swimming, fishing and paddling, drawing local residents and even those from cities as far away as Dallas, Texas. Tourism plays a significant role in the local economy. Just as the river is currently important to local communities, archaeological digs have uncovered vast historical and cultural resources along its banks.

THE THREAT

The River Valley Regional Water District, a small water supply group that provides drinking water for rural areas near Van Buren, Arkansas, has proposed blocking Lee Creek with a new dam known as the Pine Mountain Project. The dam site, located near the stream's midpoint, was first considered in 1949, then in 1965, and again in 1995, but was dropped by the city of Fort Smith due to its inefficiency compared to other alternatives. Although the official reason for the dam is water supply, the water board has neither demonstrated a need for the water nor shown that building a dam would provide cheaper water for customers. Instead, the water district has promoted the dam for recreation, despite staunch opposition from many recreational users.

The threat of the Pine Mountain dam goes beyond Lee Creek itself. The water district has submitted a proposal to ADEQ that would severely weaken the state's Extraordinary Resource Water protections for all designated rivers and streams in the state of Arkansas. Weakening this state designation would remove substantial safeguards that protect Arkansas' finest rivers and streams — one of every six in the state.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Residents of Fort Smith and Van Buren enjoy recreational opportunities and the economic benefits from this river-based tourism that only a free-flowing Lee Creek can deliver. Since the city of Fort Smith is the current water supplier for Van Buren and surrounding areas, maintaining this relationship with Fort Smith would allow the water district to guarantee Van Buren-area residents sufficient water to provide adequate supply through 2050. Thus, these communities are not currently



DEBBIE DOSS

LIKE THE LAKE FT. SMITH DAM (BELOW), THE PINE MOUNTAIN PROJECT WOULD DROWN LEE CREEK, A BOATER'S PARADISE.



DEBBIE DOSS

DEBBIE DOSS

facing a critical water shortage. Instead, they have an opportunity to proactively institute solutions such as water efficiency and demand management to help secure a reliable water supply and prevent a water scarcity crisis from occurring. What doesn't make sense is building a new dam that will damage Lee Creek and deprive communities of the benefits of a healthy river when these viable, non-structural alternatives to the Pine Mountain dam exist.

Furthermore, Arkansas' Extraordinary Resource Waters are an integral part of the state's natural and cultural heritage, enhancing quality of life and bolstering tourist economies. Weakening these state protections would expose Arkansas' best rivers to degradation from a host of threats, and is not worth the risk.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

The Pollution Control and Ecology Commission (PCEC) is reviewing proposed alterations to the state's Extraordinary Resource Water regulations and will finalize the rule changes in May 2007. Following this, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 in

Dallas will need to approve the finalized rules. The current designation prevents streams from being altered, and it is vitally important that the state maintain existing protections for these special places, as they are

the best remaining waterways in the state. Any changes to these rules will make these streams more vulnerable to degradation and could easily open the door to other similar projects. The ADEQ, PCEC and the EPA must uphold the protections mandated under the Extraordinary Resource Water status and reject any significant changes to the regulations.

Furthermore, the Environmental Impact Study for the Pine Mountain Project cannot be completed without funding from Congress. Congress should not allocate any federal funding to the dam because there are other more economically and environmentally beneficial options.

TAKE ACTION

WWW.AMERICANRIVERS.ORG/ENDANGEREDRIVERS



TOM KENNON

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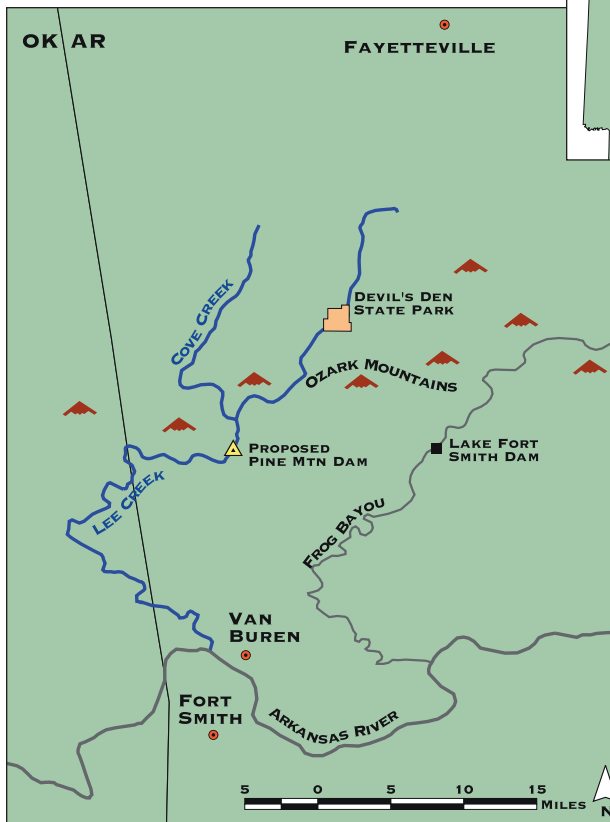
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STREAMS BEARING ARKANSAS' EXTRAORDINARY RESOURCE WATERS DESIGNATION ARE THE BEST IN THE STATE AND SHOULD REMAIN THAT WAY.



#10 CHUITNA RIVER

THREAT: PROPOSED COAL MINE

SUMMARY

A massive, proposed coal strip mine threatens Alaska's pristine Chuitna River, which produces some of the state's largest chinook (king) salmon. Unless state and federal agencies reject permits for the project, the proposed mine will destroy this wild river's surrounding watershed and dump billions of gallons of mining waste into rich fisheries habitat every year. Beyond the obvious impacts of this huge mine, state and federal agencies should also consider the impacts of more mercury in Alaskan fish, and the effects of more greenhouse gases on the "poster state" for global warming.

THE RIVER

Located 45 miles west of Anchorage, the Chuitna River flows freely for 25 miles from its headwaters at the base of the Alaska Range before emptying into Cook Inlet. With only one unpaved road crossing, the river supports a diverse and unique fabric of life, including all five species of North American Pacific wild salmon, trout, Dolly Varden, bald eagles, trumpeter swans, sandhill cranes, shorebirds, songbirds, grizzly and black bears, moose, beaver and small mammals.

Accessible only by air, all-terrain vehicles or snowmobile, two communities — Tyonek (largely Alaska Natives) and Beluga — lie near the river's mouth. Because there is no road access to the villages, these communities rely heavily on year-round subsistence fishing, hunting and trapping. Alaska Natives have relied on the rich fisheries of the river for

thousands of years, and the surrounding area is rich with archaeological remains of tribal life. Recreational and commercial hunting and fishing also occur along the river, generating much-needed revenues for local residents.

THE THREAT

The Chuitna River is under immediate threat from PacRim Coal's proposed Chuitna Coal Project, a massive strip mine on a permitting fast-track that will extract a staggering one billion metric tons of coal. Two new developments have revived interest in this mine, which was originally authorized in 1990. First, Asian and other markets are clamoring for cheap energy. On top of this demand, plans to build the massive Pebble gold and copper mine nearby would require significant new power production, and coal is a likely source. With new demand and rising energy prices, PacRim is pushing ahead with development in this pristine watershed.

This massive mine will have an adverse and major impact on this biologically significant river. The proposed project will discharge more than 7 million gallons of mining wastes per day into tributaries of the Chuitna River. The mining pollution will severely threaten resident fish and salmon spawning beds. One salmon-bearing tributary of the Chuitna will be mined directly. The mine will also disturb more than 30 square miles of the watershed, including many of the seeps, bogs and wetlands that sustain the excellent water quality and fish habitat of the Chuitna River.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Even in the unlikely event that the mine avoids a single illegal discharge, the project will pollute and negatively affect water flow in and around important salmon spawning and other fish and wildlife habitat. Burning more coal could even increase the mercury in Alaska's prized fisheries. This in turn will pose a significant threat to the two communities that lie near the river's mouth and depend upon subsistence, commercial and recreational fishing. Losing the valuable and sustainable benefits that the Chuitna's pristine ecosystem offers in order to provide a temporary infusion of



DAMION BROOK KINTZ

COMMERCIAL, RECREATIONAL AND SUBSISTENCE FISHING ON THE CHUITNA RIVER ARE IMPORTANT ECONOMIC DRIVERS AND CULTURAL RESOURCES FOR ALASKANS.



LUKE SCAROLA

polluting energy is short-sighted in the extreme. For decades to come, Alaskans will bear the full costs of environmental degradation, while a private company reaps profits from its destructive strip mine.

On an even larger scale, coal-fired power plants are one of the largest single human-generated sources of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. A massive new coal mine in Alaska would contribute to global warming in a state already witnessing melting glaciers and warming salmon streams. Rather than selling its resources off to the highest bidder, Alaska should protect those natural ecosystems that are the best defense against the climate disruption the state is already experiencing.

WHAT MUST BE DONE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will issue a final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement by summer 2007. Additionally, the state of Alaska has convened its Large Mine Permitting Team to oversee all of the permits necessary for the mine's approval. Final permits and authorizations are expected late in 2007. The EPA and the Large Mine Permitting Team should reject these permits, resisting pressure from mine operators.

The Alaska Legislature recently created the Alaska Climate Impact Assessment Commission to offer recommendations and provide possible solutions to minimize the impact of global warming. The Commission must not ignore the impacts of coal production and combustion on the Chuitna River and other wild



Alaskan salmon streams in their final report and proposals for action to the Legislature.

HEALTHY RIVERS AND ECOSYSTEMS OFFER THE BEST MEANS FOR ADAPTING TO GLOBAL WARMING.

TAKE ACTION

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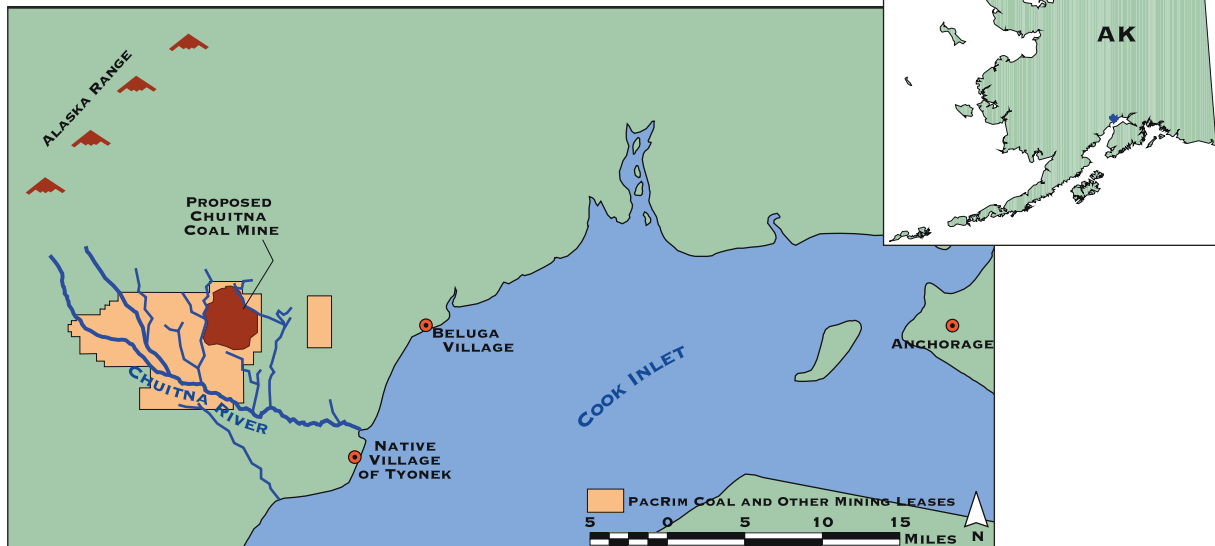
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LOIS ROBIN

#1 PAJARO RIVER

CALIFORNIA

THREAT: FAILURE TO ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

The Pajaro's dubious distinction as America's Most Endangered River of 2006 has been a catalyst for government agencies and concerned citizens to continue gaining insight into both the challenges and the potential of this river. Unfortunately, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is still dragging its feet on a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that should offer the opportunity to restore natural flood protection benefits along the entire length of the river. Originally scheduled for completion last summer, the DEIS is now slated for release in December 2007. On a more positive note, the state of California recently contributed \$25 million to support local collaborative efforts to integrate environmental, water quality and water supply goals with the flood protection plan for the river. As an example of how the report listing has brought much-needed public attention to the river, Mount Madonna School in Watsonville has incorporated the Pajaro River into its curriculum, and students are already undertaking projects to help protect their hometown river.

#2 UPPER YELLOWSTONE RIVER

MONTANA

THREAT: FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT

Bank stabilization projects and riverside development continue to compromise the integrity and scenic beauty of the Upper Yellowstone River. Shortly after the report's release, Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) demanded that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stop stalling on its Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) for the river. Since then, the agency has completed much-

GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALITION



American Rivers lists ten rivers every year in our *America's Most Endangered Rivers* report because a major decision in the coming year will determine the fate of each river. Many of these decisions go the right way for rivers, and for the people and communities who depend upon them. However, it is not unusual for efforts to save and protect these rivers to continue beyond a 12-month time frame. What follows is a progress report on last year's America's Most Endangered Rivers, highlighting both the victories and the challenges that persist.

Visit WWW.AMERICANRIVERS.ORG/ENDANGEREDRIVERS to learn about how you can help these rivers today.

needed impact studies. Also, earlier this year the agency held a public scoping meeting on the SAMP, for which public comments are being accepted until April 21, 2007. The public continues to push for the Corps to establish a firm cap on the amount of bank stabilization activity that is allowed on this treasured river.

#3 WILLAMETTE RIVER OREGON

THREAT: INDUSTRIAL AND MUNICIPAL POLLUTION

Though toxic mixing zones are still a problem on the Willamette River, the Oregon Legislature is taking up the issue this year. Co-sponsors have signed on to move legislation that would phase out toxic mixing zones and in the interim will mark where these

mixing zones exist. Governor Ted Kulongoski and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality — both well aware of popular support to restore the Willamette River — have jointly proposed a new \$1.5 million program to monitor toxic pollution in the river.



WILLAMETTE RIVERKEEPER



YELLOW DOG WATERSHED PRESERVE, INC.

direct threat not just to the Salmon Trout, but also to Lake Superior, the most pristine of the Great Lakes. The MDEQ has pledged to thoroughly review its own reports and to investigate why the information was kept from the public record. In other good news for the river, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently announced that Kennecott also would have to ensure that the mine complies with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. Unfortunately, another threat has emerged that would also put people, rivers and wildlife at risk from acid mine drainage. Canadian-owned Prime Meridian Resources Corp. recently announced plans to begin test drilling for nickel and copper in the Upper Peninsula's Baraga basin — just two miles from Kennecott's proposed mine.

#4 SALMON TROUT RIVER MICHIGAN

THREAT: ACID MINE DRAINAGE

The fight to save the Salmon Trout River is heating up. After tentatively approving permits for the Kennecott Minerals Company's nickel and copper mine, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) recently withdrew this draft decision after the public release of an internal report questioning the soundness of the mine's design. The report, written by an agency consultant, raised concerns over the possibility of the mine's roof collapsing — an alarming issue considering that the proposed Eagle Project would be located squarely in the headwaters of the Salmon Trout. Mining pollution would pose a

#5 SHENANDOAH RIVER VIRGINIA AND WEST VIRGINIA

THREAT: RUNAWAY DEVELOPMENT

Progress on the Shenandoah River has been slow but steady. Counties throughout the watershed are considering new policies that will protect their water resources, including ways to encourage more compact, denser development. On surrounding farmland, innovative agricultural pilot projects promise new ways to reduce the nutrients entering the waterway. Land trusts also had a record year,



MOUNTAIN VISIONS

permanently protecting thousands of acres in the region from future development. However, fish kills on the Shenandoah continue, with another occurring this past December. Meanwhile, the Shenandoah River Fish Kill Task Force is still investigating the mysterious fish kill two years ago that eliminated up to 80 percent of smallmouth bass and sunfish populations. Last fall, Virginia Governor Tim Kaine authorized \$150,000 from the state's Environmental Emergency Response Fund to support these scientific efforts. The Virginia Senate also passed legislation authorizing \$100,000 to support additional research on the problems plaguing the river.

#6 BOISE RIVER

IDAHO

THREAT: CYANIDE LEACH MINE

Earlier this year, Boise Mayor David Bieter announced his opposition to the proposed cyanide heap leach gold mining operation near the headwaters of the Boise River. Mayor Bieter said that more than two years of studying the proposal, as well as last year's Most Endangered Rivers designation of the Boise River, convinced him that the mining company's plans for protecting the environment are grossly inadequate given the enormity of the threat. Despite the mining company's assertions to the contrary, open pit cyanide heap

leach mining has an abysmal environmental record not only in the western United States but around the world, the mayor said. While the city of Boise has no regulatory authority over the mine proposal, the mayor called upon the U.S. Forest Service and the state of Idaho to hold the Atlanta Gold project to the highest operational, financial, transportation and environmental standards allowed by law. The mayor is also urging other local governments across the state to go on record in opposition to the mine.



IDAHO CONSERVATION LEAGUE



CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER CITIZENS ASSN.

#7 CALOOSAHATCHEE RIVER

FLORIDA

THREAT: RELEASES OF TOXIC WATER

The Caloosahatchee River remains besieged. Last summer the Caloosahatchee experienced the worst algal blooms in recent memory, with outbreaks of red tide and blue-green algae turning the river a kaleidoscope of colors. Over the winter, two to three feet of macro-algae could still be found piled on beaches near the river's mouth. The Caloosahatchee also continues to be regularly inundated with toxins, leading to fish kills and human health problems. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has proposed a revised operating plan that would reduce the release of the most harmful contaminated flows from Lake Okeechobee into the Caloosahatchee River. However, the agency's proposal would increase slightly less harmful releases from the lake, which are likely to negate any potential benefits of decreasing the worst kind of releases. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has proposed dramatic reductions in pollutant flows into the lake from surrounding lands in its draft pollution standards, but these solutions have met with resistance. Making matters worse, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection announced earlier this year that it will create new, downgraded water classifications. These new classes have the potential to render the Caloosahatchee River no longer suitable for swimming and general recreation. This pattern of neglect for the river puts at stake the \$2 billion tourism industry, the commercial fishing industry, and important habitat for wildlife, including the endangered Florida manatee.

EMILY CHENEL

#8 BRISTOL BAY

ALASKA

THREAT: OPEN PIT MINING

In the wake of last year's Most Endangered Rivers designation, thousands of Alaskans have joined the campaign to stop construction of Pebble Mine, a massive open pit gold, copper and molybdenum mine proposed in southwest Alaska. Perched at the headwaters of rivers feeding Bristol Bay — home to the largest-known wild sockeye salmon runs on Earth — Pebble Mine has sparked serious political debate in the state. Those opposed to the mine include not just conservationists, but the

United Fishermen of Alaska, the largest statewide commercial fishing organization, dozens of Alaska Native corporations and tribes, more than three dozen leading sporting goods retailers, and even Sen. Ted Stevens (R-AK). The Alaska Legislature is also considering bills to protect salmon habitat and to designate a large swath of the Bristol Bay watershed as a protected fish refuge, which could thwart Canadian-owned Northern

Dynasty Mineral's plans to build the Pebble Mine. However, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management is moving forward with plans to allow mining in more than one million federal acres in the region.

#9 SAN JACINTO RIVER

TEXAS

THREAT: UNREGULATED SAND MINING

Earlier this year, Texas state Sen. Tommy Williams (R-District 4) introduced legislation to establish a pilot program that would protect portions of the San Jacinto River from sand and gravel mining. If passed, the bill would allow the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the San Jacinto River Authority and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to monitor sand and gravel mining operations on the west and east forks of the San Jacinto River. The bill also would require environmen-

tal restoration of these pits to prevent harm to surface and groundwater and, at a minimum, twice-yearly visual inspection and sampling. Conservationists applaud Sen. Williams for leading the charge to protect the San Jacinto watershed.

Also deserving of praise is the bill's co-sponsor, Texas state Rep. Corbin Van Arsdale (R-District 130), who wants to expand the legislation to include the Spring Creek tributary.

#10 VERDE RIVER

ARIZONA

THREAT: GROUNDWATER PUMPING

Proponents of the Big Chino Pipeline continue to make headway, despite evidence that pumping groundwater from the Big Chino aquifer will result in drastically diminished flows in the Upper Verde River. The U.S. Geological Survey has concluded that the Big Chino aquifer supplies more than 80 percent of the water emanating from the headwater springs that maintain flow in the Upper Verde — particularly during the driest times of year when freshwater is needed most for both people and wildlife. Nearly 5,000 concerned citizens have sent letters to federal, state and local officials opposing the pipeline. In addition, the river is on track to be designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as critical habitat for endangered fish species.

Despite these developments, and the fact that cost estimates for the project have more than doubled to nearly \$200 million, the Prescott City Council remains committed to moving forward with the pipeline. Construction could begin as early as fall 2007, and the pipeline could begin carrying water from the Big Chino aquifer to new development in the fast-growing cities in the Prescott area by 2009.



BRYAN CARLILE, LEGACY LAND TRUST



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REPORT DESIGN: Patrice Gallagher, Gallagher/Wood Design
MAPS: Ross Freeman, American Rivers | COVER PHOTO: Santa Fe River, Julie West
PRINTING: Lake Lithograph, Manassas, Virginia

This report was printed on New Leaf Paper, 50% post-consumer recycled

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